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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

30 December 1948

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM NO. 110

SUBJECT: Alleged Argentine Participation in Recent Latin American Military Coups.

CIA has no credible evidence to substantiate, and sees no reason to place credence in allegations that: (1) Argentina participated in favor of the military in recent revolts and attempted revolts against several Latin American governments; or (2) Argentina is now engaged in a planned campaign of intervention in the affairs of other countries with the intention of assisting in setting up Latin American governments favorably disposed to Argentina.

Concerning the first point, it can only be said that there is no evidence that the Argentine government has actually engaged in activities to assist the revolts and attempted revolts that have so far taken place.

Support for the second point is alleged to be found in the fact that Argentina promptly recognized the military governments in both Peru and Venezuela. Such prompt recognition is, however, consistent with general Argentine policy of continuing diplomatic relations despite changes in governments, and needs no special explanation in the case of Peru and Venezuela. Another example of charges made is that by a Chilean radio station: namely, that Bogotá Resolution XXXV on continuance of diplomatic relations was introduced by Argentina to facilitate military revolts. Actually, this proposal was first brought forward by Mexico. It was supported by Argentina, the Dominican Republic, and Ecuador; and was opposed initially by Chile and Peru.

The Argentine government is unquestionably carrying out a long-range program designed to extend Argentine influence throughout Latin America through propaganda and economic penetration. There is reason to believe that Argentina considers military-dominated governments favorable to that end. Argentine military representatives abroad, and their civilian colleagues

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as well, consistently engage in vigorous propaganda efforts in favor of Peron-type governments under military control but based on labor support. They also agitate in favor of close association of the other American republics with Argentina. The activities of these representatives furthermore occasionally pass the bounds of discretion and international good-taste. (There is also a report that might indicate Argentine promise of some support for a planned revolt in Ecuador.) There is, however, no evidence that the Argentine government has undertaken a concerted political drive against the other countries, or that it has furnished or promised to furnish any actual assistance in carrying out the revolts that have occurred. The situation in the countries more frequently mentioned in these charges is as follows:

25X1X4 Peru - The nearest approach to evidence that the Argentine government was connected with the 30 October ousting of President Bustamante is a [REDACTED] report that the Ecuadoran Ambassador to Peru held cancelled checks drawn by high Argentine officials in favor of Peruvian army officers and dated prior to the coup. It is hardly probable that Argentine officials would leave so plain a trail. [REDACTED] 25X1X4

25X1X4 [REDACTED] it has been impossible to verify this report. All field sources agree with US Embassy Lima that there is no confirmation of the many rumors that Argentina was implicated in the revolt.

Venezuela - Former President Betancourt has given no proof of his allegation that Argentina had collaborated in the Venezuelan army's late-November overthrow of the Gallegos government, nor have other charges of Argentine participation been substantiated.

Chile - The Chilean government requested the recall of the first secretary of the Argentine Embassy in Santiago on the grounds that he had urged a Chilean general to participate in a conspiracy against the government. In addition, Chilean President Gonzalez has referred to undisclosed evidence of Argentine complicity in this unsuccessful effort of disaffected army elements to overthrow his government early in November. It is conceivable that President González may have been referring to photostatic copies of checks allegedly sent from Argentina to finance a revolt in Chile.

It is, however, unlikely that, if the President actually had such evidence, he would have withheld it throughout the controversy with Argentina relative to the recall of the Embassy secretary. Although

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the Chilean Government continues to assert its charge of Argentine intervention and has even intimated that it might be a matter for a ruling by an international court, there has recently appeared a disposition on the part of the Chilean Government not to press the issue.

No clear evidence of Argentine complicity has been revealed.

Ecuador - Argentine representatives in Quito are reliably reported to be closely associated with a military-led opposition group that seeks the overthrow of the Galo Plaza government. The Argentine cultural attaché is reported by one source to have offered financial assistance to this group but the report has not been confirmed. The Ecuadoran defense minister has charged that Argentine agents have smuggled arms to support a military coup in Ecuador. He has, however, given no proof of this. In support of his further allegation that Argentina is generally fomenting Latin American revolutions, he cited only unverified reports of the existence of cashed Argentine checks in favor of Peruvian army officers.

El Salvador - There is no evidence of Argentine participation in the recent revolt.

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